DĀMAKA PRAHASNAM.

THE

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PREFACE.

I am editing herewith a single-act drama named Dāmaka-prahasana of which the text and an English translation is appended hereto. The piece has not yet been put down conclusively to any particular author. But in matters of diction phraseology and plan, it bears a companionship to the thirteen works of so-called Bhasa, and to Bhagavadajjuka, Mattavilāsaprahasana, and Kalyāṇasaugandhika. The facts that the stage direction 'Nāndyantē tataḥ pravisati sūtradhāraḥ' comes before the Nāndi verse, that sthāpanā appears to have taken the place of Prastāvanā, and that there appears no suggestion of names of the Drama or the author in the sthāpanā portion taken together with the diction of the piece prove the similarity. Hence the learned suggestions and comments made by several scholars (whose names, come to about a hundred, have been published in a recent issue of the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay branch, by V. S. Suktankar) concerning the time, authorship etc. of so-called Bhasa's Svapnavāsavadatta and other works, will as a rule apply to this little piece as well.

On an analysis of the present work, I find that the sentences, slokas, and even words occuring herein are to be found in the Svapnavāsavadattā and other dramas, in the Mattavilāsaprahasana, Kāuṭalya's Arthaśāstra, Kumārasambhava of Kālidasa, and in such other books; the only exception being the Bharatavākya at the end of this play. The nāndi verse can be seen in the Arthaśāstra, the anusṭup verse in the middle occurs in Kumārasambhava, while the same sentences of the body of the play in the drama named

Karṇabhāra of so-called Bhasa. The reason and origin of these similarities should be explained by those critics who have judged upon the similarities in Cārudatta and Mṛcca-kaṭika. My learned friend Mr. Ramakrishnakavi M. A., has called this as the 14th play of Bhasa in his lecture at the recent Oriental Conference held in Madras.

The story of the play under discussion bears an object lesson on the value of being truthful. Barring this there is nothing of moral worth in it. The Indian Gurukula life and the life of the hermitage in olden times is vividly portrayed.

The manuscript of this play has been obtained from the late Kriṣna Tantri of Chenganur, Travancore state. It is written in old Malayalam characters, which are very different from the modern ones. It was fortunate that a copy was bereft of mistakes because no other copy was available in central Travancore even after a diligent search.

V. VEṆKATARĀM SHASTRI.

* दामकप्रहसनम् *

[नान्द्यन्ते ततः प्रविशति सूत्रधारः]

सुवर्णपुष्पीं ब्रह्माणीं ब्रह्माणं च कुशध्वजम् ।
सर्वांश्च देवता वन्दे वन्दे सर्वांश्च तापसान् ॥

[नेपथ्याभिमुखमवलोक्य]

आर्ये इतस्तावत् ।

[प्रविश्य]

नटी—आर्य इयमस्मि, त्वया सहोद्यानवनं गन्तुकामा कः कालस्त्वामन्विष्य । नन्विदानीमार्येण प्रक्रीडितुमिच्छामि ।

सूत्र—आर्ये तिष्ठतु तावदुद्यानगमनचिन्ता । इदानीं ब्रह्मदत्तनगरेऽस्मिन् काम्पिल्यमहाराजसदसि मिलितेयं परिषदभिनवेन प्रयोगेणाराधनीयास्माभिः । तन्मया स्वेषु स्वेषु कार्येष्वसंमूढाः शैलूषा उदारनेपथ्यभृतः सज्जीकृताः ।

नटी—अस्ति काम्पिल्यं नाम नगरम् । राजा च ब्रह्मदत्तो नाम ।

सूत्र—तदेवाभिप्रेतं मयापि, तव दर्शनजनितकुतूहलेनास्मि संभ्रान्तः ।

नटी—आर्य बिभेमि, को नु खल्वेष दुष्टमानुषः आमन्त्रणविप्रलब्धो ब्राह्मण इव कृतसमावर्तनो वटुक इव च त्वरमाण इत एवाभिवर्तते ।

सूत्र—आर्ये प्रयोग उपक्रान्तः। आवामप्यनन्तरकरणीयाय सज्जीभवावः।

'निष्क्रान्तौ'

स्थापना ॥

(ततः प्रविशति दामकः)

भो न जानन्त्यवस्थाविशेषमीश्वरपुत्रा नाम। सत्यं खलु लोकप्रवादः 'संघचारिणोऽनर्था' इति। अहं खलु तत्रभवत अंगदेशाधिपतेर्महाराजकर्णस्य प्रियवयस्यो नाम्ना आर्यदामकः। नयविक्रयसंपन्नोपि सूत्थानोपि अधःकृताशेषराजमण्डलोपि न खलु तावता महाराजस्तृप्तिमापन्नः। स इदानीं त्रिलोकविजयी रावण इव अप्रतिहतशक्तिर्भवितुं निखिलान्यस्त्राण्युपशिक्षितुकामः परशुरामाश्रममागतः। तत्रभवतानुचरीकृतोप्यहं अनर्थसलिलावर्ते महति खलु प्रक्षिप्तोस्मि। मया खलु राज्ञ उच्छ्रितेषु प्रासादेषु वासः, अन्तपुरदीर्घिकासु स्नानं, सुविहितशय्येषु पल्यंकेषु शयनं, पूर्वाह्णे भोजनं, अपराह्णे सुरसानि पानकानि, पञ्चसुगन्धोपहितं ताम्बूलं, श्लक्ष्णवसनपरिधानं चानुभूयते, भर्तृदारिका च मां स्निग्धेन भोजनेन प्रत्युद्गच्छति—कुत्र न खलु गत आर्यदामक इति। तथाप्येकः खलु महान् दोषः, ममाहारः सुष्ठु न परिणमति। सुप्रच्छदनायां शय्यायामपि निद्रां न लभे। मया च महाराजः सपट्टेन शीर्षेणानुबन्ध विज्ञप्तः। नाहमनुगच्छामि महाराजमिति। मृगपक्षिसंकुलं चैतदरण्यं परिभ्रमन्नहं बुभुक्षया ओदनमयमिव जीवलोकं पश्यामि। अस्वस्थशरीरश्चास्मि। औदरिकस्य ममाभ्यवहारचिन्तया मेऽक्षिणी चञ्चलायेते। शीर्षवेदना

च मां बाधते। काशकुसुमरेणुना पतितेन सोदका मे दृष्टिः। मार्गमध्ये दास्याः पुत्रैर्मधुकरैः पीडितोस्मि। मम बुद्धिश्चेदानीमादर्शमण्डलगतेव छाया वामेषु दक्षिणा दक्षिणेषु वामा भवति। अहं खलु शृणोमि गन्धं श्रवणाभ्याम्। अन्धकारपूरिताभ्यां नासापुटाभ्यां पश्यामि। रैभ्यसगोत्रो ब्रह्मबन्धुरहं यस्य कस्य वा भागिनेयः खलु भीमसेनस्य घटोत्कच इव।

(विचिन्त्य)

निर्वेद एव खल्वनुक्रमग्राहिणं स्वामिनमुपाश्रितस्य भृत्यजनस्य।

(पुरोऽवलोक्य)

आ एष दुष्टकुक्कुरः अस्मादाश्रमाभोगात् वल्कलं गृहीत्वा धावति। दास्याः पुत्र कुत्र गमिष्यसि, तव दन्तानहं भङ्क्ष्यामि।

(परिक्रम्याश्रममवलोक्य)

भोः सर्वजनसाधारणमाश्रमपदं नाम। सन्तुष्टतपस्विजनोयमाश्रमाभोगः। अत्र खलु चीरवल्कलवसनाः चित्रजटापुञ्जपिञ्जरितोत्तमांगाः कृष्णत्वचं ग्रन्थिमतीं दधानाः आश्रमवासिनः संयमिनः समित्कुशकुसुमादीनि स्वैरं वनादुपनयन्ति। इह केचित्सलिलमवगाढा मुनिजनाः। अत्र हि प्रदीप्तोग्निर्भाति। वैश्वदेवसंभूतश्च धूमो प्रविचरति मुनिवनम्। एते खलु महात्मानः हुतजातवेदसोऽनूचानाः वार्धकशोभि वल्कलं श्लथलम्बिनीर्जटाश्च बिभ्राणाः,

मुक्तायज्ञोपवीतानि बिभ्रतो हैमवल्कलाः।
रत्नाक्षसूत्राः प्रव्रज्यां कल्पवृक्षा इवाश्रिताः॥

इमे गालव्यमाण्डव्यकौञ्जायनमुण्डकवामदेवादयः शिष्यवटुकाः अध्ययनोन्मुखा एवाग्निशरणं समिदाधानैः परिरक्षन्ति। अत्र च

सर्वस्नेहधान्ययवसतृणकाष्ठचर्मांगारविषाणवेणुवल्कलदारुप्रावरणाश्मनिचयाश्चानेकवर्षोपभोग्याः संभृताः। अरण्यबीजाञ्जलिदानलालिताश्चैते हरिणा अस्मिन्नाश्रमवाटे इतस्ततः परिभ्रमन्ति। इमाश्च मुनिकन्यकाः वृक्षकान् पुत्रकानिव मातरो घटस्तनप्रस्रवणैर्वर्धयन्ति। अहो महती खल्वस्य विभूतिः।

(विचार्य)

अयि एरण्डवृक्ष किं भणसि—समयोऽतिक्रान्तः समयोऽतिक्रान्त इति। तद्यावदहं तत्रभवतः सकाशं गच्छामि। ईश्वराः स्वस्ति कुर्वन्तु।

'निष्क्रान्तः'

(ततः प्रविशति परशुरामः कर्णश्च)

कर्णः—भगवन् वन्दे।

परशुरामः—को भवान्, किमर्थमिहागतः।

कर्णः—भगवन् अखिलानि अस्त्राण्युपशिक्षितुमिच्छामि।

परशुरामः—ब्राह्मणेषूपदेशं करिष्यामि, न क्षत्रियाणाम्।

कर्णः—नाहं क्षत्रियः।

परशुरामः—तर्हि उपदिशामि, आगच्छ।

'निष्क्रान्तौ'

(ततः प्रविशतो भटौ)

प्रथमः—सखे दुर्मुख ! अपि ज्ञातम् ।

दुर्मुखः—दुर्बुद्धे ! किमिति किमिति ।

दुर्बुद्धिः—अस्माकं महाराजोऽङ्गराजः फलमूलसमित्कुशकुसुमाहरणाय गतवता गुरुणा जामदग्न्येनानुगतः । ततः स गुरुः वनपरिभ्रमणपरिश्रमात् महाराजास्याङ्के निद्रामुपगतः ।

दुर्मुखः—ततस्ततः ।

दुर्बुद्धिः—ततश्च,

कृत्तो वज्रमुखेन नाम कृमिणा दैवात्तदूरुद्वये
निद्राच्छेदभयादसह्यत गुरोर्धैर्यात्तदा वेदना ।
उत्थाय क्षतजाप्लुतः स सहसा रोषानलोद्दीपितः
बुध्वा तं च शशाप कालविफलान्यस्त्राणि ते सन्त्विति ॥

दुर्मुखः—अहो कष्टमभिहितं तत्रभवता । गच्छावः ।

'निष्क्रान्तौ'

(भरतवाक्यम्)

सर्वत्र सम्पदः सन्तु विपदोऽपि न सन्तु च ।
सर्वे सन्तु च सन्तुष्टा असन्तुष्टा न सन्तु च ॥

समाप्तम्.

TRANSLATION.

Damaka Prahasanam.

(Enter manager at the close of Nāndī.)

Manager—

My obeisance I do make
To Brahma's spouse of the golden flower,
To Brahma with the kuśa flag
To gods all an' to sages all.

(Looking towards the curtain.)

My lady, just come here.

Actress—(*entering*) Here am I, my lord! anxious to take a trip into the park in your company, how long have I been in search of you. I would now enjoy the time with you, my lord?

Manager—Let it alone for the time being—your thought of visiting the park. Now in this city of Brahmadatta, there people, who have assembled in the presence of Maharaja Kāmpilya, are to be entertained with a new play. Therefore I have made ready actors who are well-dressed and who are thoroughly conversant with their individual parts.

Actress—I know there is a city named Kāmpilya and a king named Brahmadatta.

Manager—Oh! I meant the same. The joy at meeting you confused me.

Actress—My lord ? I feel afraid. Who is this bad man, that comes this way in a hurry like a Brahmin who happens to be late for a feast and like a young Brahmachāri whose samāvartanam has been just over ?

Manager—My lady, the performance has begun. We too will prepare for further duties.

(EXEUNT.)

(*Then enters Dāmaka.*)

Dāmaka—(*to himself*) Oh ! great men do not realise the changes of fortune. The saying "misfortunes never come single" is, indeed, true. I am the noble Dāmaka, the intimate comrade of his Majesty the Karṇa, the king of Anga. Wise, powerful, rising, with every ruler subjugated, Maharaja Karṇa is not yet contented. Wishing to become unequalled in power like Rāvaṇa, the conqueror of the three worlds, he has now arrived at the hermitage of Paraśurāma with the object of getting himself initiated into all the higher mysteries of the bow and arrow. Though I have the good fortune of being His Majesty's follower, I am now thrown into a great whirlpool of troubles. I am accustomed to the high skyscrapers of His Majesty, to the bath in the tanks of the Royal palace, to sleep on cots with well-made beds, to delicious drinks in the afternoons, to betel sweetened with the five scents, and soft clothes of muslin. The Bhartṛdārikā awaits

me with well-dressed meals and repreatedly enquires after me asking 'where is the noble Dāmaka.' With all that, there arises one difficulty. I feel no appetite. No sleep welcomes me even on that bed covered with comfortable bedsheets. With turbaned head, I made my obeisance to and informed His Majesty that I was not accompanying him hither. Wandering in this forest of beasts and birds I imagine these creatures to be my food. I don't feel well also. Glutton as I am, my eyes become restless at the thought of food. Headache too troubles me. The breeze-borne pollen of the Kāśa flower has fallen into my eyes and made them watery. These bastard bees hurt me on the way. My senses play me false like the images in a mirror—right for left and left for right. I smell with my ears; I see with my dark nostrils.

(*Thinking*)

Misery is the lot of those who depend upon a master who heeds no advice.

(*Casting his eyes forward*)

Ah ! this wicked dog is running off with a bark-garment from that hermitage yonder. Thou bastard where art thou going ? I shall break thy teeth.

(*Walking round and looking towards*)

Oh ? the hermitage is a common place of rest to all. Every hermit lives a contented life here. Clothed in bark-garments, with variegated plaits of matted

hair flowing from their heads, and wearing belts made of the skin of the black-deer, there anchorites of the hermitage are freely bringing samit kuśa and flowers from the forest. Here some are having their plunge in the water. There the stirred fire is glowing. The smoke from the fire is spreading over the Penance-Grove. Other great-souled ascetics who have made their sacrifices to fire and who are learned in the Vedas and Vedangas shine in their worn-out bark-garments and in their plaits of matted hair loosely hanging round their shoulders. With their pearl-like sacred thread; golden bark-garments and their ruby like beads they appear in their asceticism like the heavenly trees Kalpavṛkṣa. The Brahmacāri disciples, such as Gālavya etc., attentive to their lessons are enlivening the fire with samit fuel. All kinds of oil seeds, grain, grass, fuel, skins, samit, horns, bamboos, barks, and stones are collected here for use throughout years. The deer brought upon the handfuls of forest grain are wandering here and there at the gate of the hermitage. The anchorite girls are watering the young saplings from their waterpots like mothers nursing the babies at their breasts. Oh ! the hermitage is indeed wonderful.

(*Listening*)

Oh ! Eraṇḍa tree 'it is time. It is time.' Do you say. So I am off to His Majesty. May the Devas vouchsafe their blessings.

(EXIT.)

(Then enter Paraśurāma and Karṇa.)

Karṇa—I bow to you, Bhagavan !

Paraśurāma—Who are you ? What brought you here ?

Karṇa—I wish to be initiated into the higher mysteries of the bow.

Paraśurāma—I shall instruct the Brahmins but not the Kṣatriyas.

Karṇa—I am not a Kṣatriya.

Paraśurāma—Then I shall teach you ; come on.

(EXEUNT.)

(Then enter two soldiers.)

The first—Durmukha, my friend ! did you know ?

Durmukha—Durbuddhi, what is that ?

Durbuddhi—Our Maharaja accompanied his Guru Paraśurāma to the forests for collecting fruits, roots, samit, kuśa and flowers. Tired by the forest trip, Paraśurāma lay down on maharaja's knee and went to sleep.

Durmukha—What then ? what then ?

Durbuddhi—And then, his thighs were bitten accidentally by one beetle named Vajramukha. For fear of disturbing the Guru's sleep he silently endured the pain with courage. Smeared with blood and furiously angry, the Guru sprang up, recognised maharaja's kṣatriya-hood, and cursed him thus :—'Let your astras not avail you when wanted.'

Durmukha—Oh ? it is a pity that His Holiness said so. Let us go.

(Exeunt.)

(*Bharatavākya.*)

Let there be planty everywhere
and nowhere be calamities.
Let content come to everyone
and none be discontented.

FINIS.